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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Rumania

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SUBJECT Control of Children by the Rumanian Communist Regime

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The following report on Communist control of Rumanian children recounts the experience of one mother with her daughter under the existing system of education. It illustrates some of the techniques used by Communist educational authorities to lessen parental influence and prevent the inculcation of beliefs hostile to the Communist regime.

1. The mother, a widow with one daughter, makes her living as a private language instructor in Bucharest. Her family was formerly wealthy and until the recent war she travelled much abroad, receiving her education in France and Switzerland. During the war she worked with the Rumanian Red Cross. Her child, who is now in her middle teens, is an excellent mathematician and shows considerable promise as an athlete.
2. The child's school day begins at nine a.m., with a short recess during the morning. She is not permitted to return to her home for lunch. In the afternoon she is required to select for reading a volume approved by her Communist instructor. Group study periods, under the supervision of the teacher, last until 1500 hours, after which the group engages in athletics until 1800 hours. A large amount of homework is generally assigned; she is freed from the burden of homework only when an evening lecture is scheduled. Attendance at such lectures is compulsory and pupils must answer a roll call. Her classes include one hour a day devoted to the study of Marxism-Leninism, with special reference to Stalin, who is designated "Slava", a term formerly reserved for the Diety. The Russian language is a required major subject.
3. On the last day of school in the summer of 1949, the child was told to prepare to leave in one week to spend a month in camp at Brasov with her schoolmates. She returned for camp in excellent health but annoyed because the instructor had become incensed upon discovering that she was reading Rumanian translations of English classics and French poetry in the original which had been given her by her mother. The instructor, who found her reading these volumes in bed at night, angrily seized and burnt them and handed her a biography of Lenin and other Communist literature. Upon her return home the child said, "Please Mama, I enjoy reading your books, but I'll read them at home when I have time. Taking them with me to camp is forbidden and only incites the rage of all the instructors".

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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4. After spending about ten days at home the child was again ordered to camp without her mother being consulted or informed of its location. The child was promised her first plane trip and it was impressed upon her that it was only through the generosity and kindness of her instructors that she was permitted to travel by plane. After two weeks' absence the daughter returned home, having injured her foot in athletic contests. She was sent to a doctor and ordered to continue her athletic training. Shortly thereafter she was ordered again to camp in or near Bucharest on the pretext that she could concentrate on curing her foot and preparing for forthcoming athletic contests. The mother did not know her whereabouts and would have been unable to contact her in the event of an emergency.

5. During one of her short stays at home the child refused an invitation to the home of a foreigner on the ground that her prestige in sport and at school would be seriously damaged no matter how innocent the occasion.

6. The mother is thankful that her child has developed no interest in the opposite sex since she believes that, if such were the case, the girl would be encouraged to engage in sexual relations. If her daughter should become pregnant, according to the mother, she would be sent to a state institution to await the birth of the child after which she would return home and the child would become the ward of the government. The mother is convinced that she now exercises no influence over her daughter, who is under the complete control of the state. She cannot give the child any organized instruction at home in view of her long hours at school and her state of utter exhaustion upon returning home.

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